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The Shape of Things

IN ONE OF THE MOST BIZARRE EPISODES IN the history of Soviet-American relations, Foreign Minister Molotov has charged American authorities with "connivance" in an alleged kidnaping of two Soviet school teachers in the city of New York. Mikhail Ivanovich Samarine, who, being one of the victims, speaks with authority, has denied publicly and in detail that he was kidnaped at all. He explains that he sought refuge at a non-Communist Russian colony near New York rather than return to the Soviet Union, that he has renounced his Soviet citizenship, and that he deliberately turned himself over to the FBI. At the time he delivered his protest to Ambassador Smith, Mr. Molotov did not know that the second victim—who (according to the Soviet version) had been rescued from her captors by the Russian Consul General—had only a few hours before leaped out of the consulate window rather than stay rescued under those auspices. The villains in the Russian version are a "White Guard gang," the New York police, the FBI, and the Un-American Affairs Committee. Samarine's soberly told story of why he failed to appear aboard the ship that was to take him home is written off as the delusions of a man rendered irresponsible by head injuries suffered in the war, although he had been deemed competent to teach the children of Soviet officials at the United Nations. As to the extraterritoriality of consulates and such technicalities, we will not walk in where lawyers fear to tread. But beyond the dream world in which "White Russian bandits" roam the streets of New York jabbing innocent Soviet citizens with drug-laden needles, the fact remains that the two teachers have sought political asylum, and they will have it. Molotov will be no more successful than Secretary Marshall would have been had he been foolish enough to demand the return of the army code clerk who some months ago elected to abandon the U. S. A. for the glories of the U. S. S. R.

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ASSUMING THAT MOLOTOV TAKES NO MORE seriously than we do his government's lurid tales of kidnaping or its explanation that Mrs. Kosenkina accidentally fell out of the consulate window, we are led to marvel that he should make so much of the episode at so delicate a moment in world diplomacy. Is the incident being exploited for home consumption, in order to keep the Russian people at a proper pitch of anti-Americanism in the event the talks end in failure? Or is the purpose to show the Westerners now negotiating in Moscow just how tough the Russians can be? It is hard to resist the second interpretation when one considers that since the initiation of the talks the Soviets have tightened the currency squeeze in Berlin, ridden roughshod over Western representatives at the Danube conference, and made no effort to soften their propaganda barrage. On this last score, it must be admitted, we are surely in no better odor, as the merest glance at our headlines will show. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that the Western diplomats will not allow the ugly climate of charge and counter-charge to dissuade them from persisting in their efforts at Moscow. If nothing else, the very need to save face should keep them at their task. For, having initiated the talks, they can afford a complete breakdown even less than the Russians. After warning that they would not negotiate as long as the blockade of Berlin continued, they are, in fact, negotiating. Should they come away from Moscow with concessions, their retreat will be more than compensated, but to fail would be to have made an investment in prestige for no return whatever. Their only course, then, is to continue the secret negotiations as long as possible—refusing to be sidetracked either by the sinister fancies of Russian propagandists or the irresponsible tactics of Republican statesmen who put the "red scare" above the price of food.

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STRIKES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT ARE banned *de facto*, if not by actual law, in many countries including the Soviet Union, so that the Russian representative on the Allied Council in Tokyo is not on very strong ground when he protests against this aspect of the recent labor ordinance of the Japanese government. But the ordinance, promulgated as the result of "advice" from General MacArthur, which the Japanese Premier chose to regard as a directive, goes far beyond the prohibition of strikes. It also denies all collective-bargaining rights to unions of government and municipal workers, and abolishes existing arbitration and mediation machinery. Moreover, it is proposed to make these restrictions permanent by embodying them in an amendment

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to the Civil Code. Such an out-Tafting of Hartley not only violates rights guaranteed by the American-sponsored Japanese constitution, but is quite at variance with the labor policies previously followed by the occupation authorities. Yet the action of the Japanese authorities does not seem to have been questioned by General MacArthur, even though it appears to have gone beyond his original suggestion. This shift of ground is presumably due to fears that Communists might capture the unions of public employees. That may be a danger, but a better antidote than repressive action would be the removal of the genuine grievances of government employees, who include not only clerks, but railroad and communications personnel and workers in the salt, tobacco, camphor, and other government monopolies. They claim that they are much worse paid than men engaged in private industries, and the statistics seem to bear them out. According to a New York *Times* dispatch, government employees have been asking for a minimum wage of 5,500 yen a month while the government is prepared to grant 4,500. Official figures show the minimum cost of living for a Tokyo family to be 10,000 yen a month.

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SO MUCH IS SAID THESE DAYS THAT IS shoddy and bombastic that at least a modest cheer should be raised for an honest confession: all is not as right as possible under the American flag. The United States, fulfilling its Charter obligation to report on its dependent peoples to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations, has admitted that the vast majority of Puerto Ricans are undernourished, that there is a crisis in control of the high rate of tuberculosis in Alaska, and that numerous other serious defects exist in American dependencies. To report poor conditions is, unfortunately, a long way from remedying them, and at least in the case of Puerto Rico, which suffers from chronic overpopulation, the remedy is not easy. But if all the powers were as frank in their revelations, it would be easier to do more than is being done now to fulfil the obligation of trustees.

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THERE IS REAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE phenomenal increase of the liberated Negro vote in the South. Since 1940, the number of qualified Negro voters has tripled. From 211,000 in 1940, it has increased to 645,000 in 1947 (12 per cent of the Negro population of voting age in the region), and will probably reach the million mark this year. The greatest numerical increase has occurred in Georgia—from 20,000 to 125,000 in the last eight years—but Oklahoma has qualified the greatest proportion of eligible Negro voters—29.6 per cent. Throughout the South the sharpest increase has taken place in the cities, which is most important in view of the noticeable urban movement of Southern Negroes

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since the war (34 per cent of the Negroes in twelve Southern states are now classified as urban dwellers). In such cities as Memphis, Atlanta, Jacksonville, and New Orleans, Negroes have been able to register with as much ease as in any Northern city. Nor is this trend likely to be reversed, for more and more whites are supporting the Negro's right to vote. The best recent example of this, of course, was the decision of Judge J. Waites Waring, discussed in last week's issue, which allowed Negroes to vote in the primary elections in South Carolina. In the past year one Negro was elected to the Kentucky legislature and another to the city council in Richmond, with considerable support, in both cases, from white voters. The situation shows generally marked improvement in Virginia, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Oklahoma; it is only in Alabama, Mississippi, and rural Louisiana that the old pattern retains its rigidity.

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THE SILLY SEASON HAS BEEN SILLIER THAN usual this year, or else we're getting older. Item: Last week, an Australian major named Carlin set sail from New Jersey in an amphibious jeep (with Virginia license plates) on a trip around the world. His bride of two months went along. Carlin bought the jeep—army surplus—for $901. He spent $9,000 having it remodeled for ocean use, but its top speed is still only four and one-half miles an hour, and only the major knows how to drive. Item: A man has won a preliminary decree of divorce on the complaint, among others, that his two-hundred-pound wife insisted on putting jelly sandwiches in his lunch box. Item: According to a wistful headline in the New York *Herald Tribune,* "Mark Sullivan Suggests Esteem for Ex-President [Hoover] Shows a Return to Old Ideals But Fears the Rest of the World Doesn't Reflect Change." Item: A rather breathless announcement from a publisher reveals that Faith Baldwin's fifty-one books have sold 9,476,166 copies. It just shows what Faith with works can accomplish.

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THE RESPONSE TO THE APPEAL FOR FUNDS to help fight the various bans imposed on *The Nation* has been extremely heartening. Although individual acknowledgment will be made, we want to express a collective "thank you" to all of our friends. Of the many encouraging letters received, one in particular might well serve as the keynote for the entire campaign. "I read *The Nation* faithfully each week," writes this West Virginia contributor, "and rarely agree with anything you say. But I thoroughly enjoy it just the same. . . . I enclose my check, to be used in any way you see fit, to make it possible to continue publishing articles that I cannot agree with."

This Is Not 1920

THE largest American corn crop on record, plus prospects of more wheat both in this country and in Europe, have renewed the hopes for a check to the rising spiral of inflation. It was the short corn crop last summer, and the crop failures in Europe, that boosted prices during the latter half of 1947 and led directly to the third round of wage increases.

Certainly, abundant crops are more helpful than short ones, but the relief is not likely to be anything like that which accompanied the precipitate fall of agricultural prices soon after World War I. Between 1920 and 1922, the average prices of American crops were cut in half, falling almost to the level of 1914. When that happened, war loans to Europe had ceased, and there was no farm-relief program in this country. Now, a good deal of the extra wheat will be bought with E. R. P. resources and used to increase the short rations of Western Europe. The prices of all major crops will, before they have gone down far, bump into the support fixed by the pledge of this government to keep them at a minimum of 90 per cent of "parity" (an adjusted price for farm products based on the relationship between farmers' income and costs prior to World War I, when farmers were comparatively well off).

With every boost in the prices of steel, automobiles, clothing, and other industrial products, the parity price of crops has risen. Indeed, parity prices lift themselves by their own bootstraps as well, since what some farmers buy is grown by other farmers; high prices for feed boost the parity prices for milk, meat, eggs, and poultry. There is no chance in the near future for any such sharp agricultural deflation as overtook us in 1921. That is a good thing for the farmers, but it poses problems for industry and the city dwellers.

During the inflation after World War I, consumer incomes strained upward to catch prices, as they have been doing recently. By 1920, consumers could not buy all that was offered for sale; business inventories accumulated, and soon the boom collapsed. But rapid deflation laid a basis for the years of industrial expansion that followed. The sharp drop of food prices increased consumers' purchasing power for manufactured products. Raw materials from the mines and the farms became relatively cheap; they fell much more than prices of finished products. This gave a wider margin to processors and manufacturers, so that they could raise wages and enjoy larger profits at the same time. The wage-earners came back into the market with increased earnings to buy a continually enlarging output. Other things helped, too, such as greater efficiency, but the price readjustment underlay the whole upward sweep of industrial prosperity in the early 1920's.

This time, the order of events has been very different.

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In World War I, there was little increase either of real wages or of production; both these events followed the post-war crisis. In World War II, real wages climbed, while production more than doubled. We now have inflation again, but it is accompanied by a boost in both production and consumers' purchasing power that previously did not occur until *after* the price readjustment consequent on the collapse of World War I inflation.

The conclusion is that those who hope for a quick deflation, followed by a long period of expansion like that of the 1920's, are resting their confidence on a false analogy. No such reduction of the cost of living or of raw material prices is in prospect. Industry cannot this time be hopped-up by wider profit margins, or by any sudden injection of new buying power on the part of consumers. Only a downward correction of industrial prices, enabling consumers to buy the immense flood of goods which industry is preparing to turn out, can save us, ultimately, from a long and grinding period of shrinking markets and unemployment. It would have been better if the price adjustments had been made in time to avoid inflation, but made they must be; and the longer the delay, the worse the prospect for stability.

By Radio from Yugoslavia:

The Danube Conference

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Belgrade, August 12

FOR nearly a fortnight now, the delegates to the Danubian conference have been sitting in temperatures of 100 to 105 degrees under the roof of the great auditorium of Belgrade University. The auditorium is decorated with the flags of all participants, including Austria, which in this respect alone is treated as an equal. So far, it may be said that everything is going according to schedule—Russian schedule—and Vishinsky is having the time of his life at this "inverted Lake Success," where the Russians have seven votes against the West's three.

Poor M. Thierry finds it all so depressing that he has recently introduced here one of those refinements of the Chamber of Deputies which quite baffle the Eastern Europeans. He won't vote for; he won't vote against; he won't abstain. He simply does not "take part in" the voting. Sometimes, upset by the whole thing, he makes a proposal that is finally adopted by everybody except himself. Altogether, the French are taking rather a catastrophic view of the conference.

Sir Charles Peake and Cavendish Cannon, the representatives of Great Britain and the United States, take a more politely resigned attitude. If seven out of ten want to adopt the Soviet draft convention as a basis for discussion, let them have it. And so, for several days now, the debate has concerned itself with this Soviet draft. All the Western amendments are automatically defeated, and the question arises: What happens if and when all forty-four of the amendments have been rejected and the Soviet draft convention emerges from committee in its full virgin purity? Do the British, Americans, and French sign it? The impression today is that London and Washington have not decided what to do, while the French seem determined not to sign. Or will there be, before the conference finishes with the draft convention, an important change in Russia's attitude and a willingness on its part to make a number of concessions to the West?

The question is worth asking, because the view is commonly expressed in Russian quarters that the Danube problem is only a tiny dispute among many others and that "the outcome of the Belgrade conference will really be settled in Moscow." This is one reason why Vishinsky may be playing for time—making long speeches on every little amendment—and waiting to hear from Moscow.

The nature of the dispute between East and West is sufficiently familiar. The Eastern powers consider the 1921 convention null and void—legally, practically, and in every other way. It was, they say, a weapon of political penetration and economic exploitation in the hands of the "Versailles powers," as Ana Pauker described them. "Danube for the Danubians" is the slogan. There have been endless discussions regarding sovereignty. Big words have been hurled across the hall—"sovereignty" from the Eastern powers and "international cooperation" from the West.

The Westerners debunk Vishinsky's conception of sovereignty as the most reactionary applied to the Danube since the eighteenth century. The Easterners scream that all the talk about international cooperation is mere hogwash. "You invoke the United Nations, and want to place the Danube under some kind of control by the Economic Council. We're sane enough to realize that you want us there simply because you're in the majority in the U. N., whereas here you're in the minority." And of course, if the Soviets get away with their convention—as they undoubtedly will in practice, at any rate—there are really mighty few solid guarantees for unrestricted Danube shipping. This would be particularly true for the non-riparian nations, especially with Austria and Germany excluded, when the scheme would become, in fact, a sort of regional pact between the seven Danube states. There is certainly some weight to the argument of the French delegate, Gros, who effectively demon-

ALEXANDER WERTH has been in Belgrade for several weeks. Another dispatch next week will deal with current Moscow-Belgrade relations. The final instalment of his series, Russia, Plus and Minus, appears in this issue on page 207.

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strated to a somewhat flummoxed Vishinsky that free navigation for the non-riparians would first require bilateral agreements with each riparian.

Vishinsky is enjoying himself as never before. It is his show. The other six Eastern delegations are well orchestrated, though perhaps not entirely so. For example, after several days of satiric and sarcastic speechifying, Vishinsky suddenly decided that the adoption of the Soviet convention was practically settled, and became extraordinarily meek and mild, as if he did not wish to provoke the Westerners into a sudden walk-out. Not so, Ana Pauker. She fumes against French exploiters, usurers, and blood-suckers. Every time she stands up to speak, she bluntly says—with minor variations—"The small powers were helpless before the war to throw you out of the Danube, but now, we tell you: 'Get out!' "

The other Easterners, however—Molnar of Hungary, Klementis of Czechoslovakia, and the Bulgars and Ukrainians—say very little. Except for Bebler of Yugoslavia—the number-two man of the Eastern delegation. He makes a point of speaking immediately after Vishinsky. Whether it is policy or insufficient resourcefulness, I do not know, but the Western delegations certainly have not made much of the paradox that finds the Yugoslavs and Russians acting like Siamese twins here and Jacob and Esau outside. The only apparent allusion to this anomaly has been made, so far, in Peake's reference to the wonderful benefits Yugoslavia derived from UNRRA. It will be a tricky moment for Yugoslavia, however, when the British handsomely propose that the Danube Commission should sit in Belgrade rather than Galatz, Rumania, as the Russians have planned.

Mr. Tobin's Haunted House

BY RUBEN LEVIN

Washington, August 12

MEMO to the Democratic Party: There is a campaign issue going begging in the act of mayhem perpetrated on the Department of Labor by the Eightieth Congress. What the legislators did, in making a shambles of the department that is supposed to look after the interests of most of the nation's 60,000,000 workers, has never been adequately publicized.

The situation is so grave that observers here freely predict that within a few years Labor may no longer exist as a separate agency of Cabinet rank. Its low estate is underlined by the fact that not until this writing, two months after the death of Secretary Lewis B. Schwellenbach, has the Secretaryship been filled. Furthermore, two of its three other top posts are still vacant. Under Secretary David L. Morse left to take the preferable post of director of the International Labor Organization; Assistant Secretary John T. Kmetz, a former vice-president of the United Mine Workers, resigned for "personal reasons." He had been the A. F. of L. liaison man in the department. Only dynamic Assistant Secretary John W. Gibson remains. Formerly Kmetz's C. I. O. counterpart, he filled in as Acting Secretary until this week, when Maurice J. Tobin, after considerable backing and filling, accepted the appointment to Mr. Truman's Cabinet.

The President had difficulty in finding a man willing to take the seat. The reluctance of some of those who were asked was not based solely, of course, on the low stature of the department. There was also the question of whether the present Administration will be in existence after January 20.

In any event, the new Secretary will inherit the smallest Cabinet department in the government—a far cry from what its founders had in mind. In 1913, legislation establishing the new agency with Cabinet rank was put through by a combination of Democrats and "wild-jackass" progressives from the Midwest Republican belt. And the bill set forth the department's purpose in hopeful terms: "To foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States; to improve their working conditions and advance their opportunities for profitable employment." William Howard Taft, a Republican President, signed it on his last day in office—a great day for labor. What is left of the organization that was established under Bob Taft's father, thirty-five years ago? In 1946, it had an operating budget of $23,000,000 and 7,000 employees. Today, its budget is down to $14,500,000 and its staff to just over 3,000. "This is going back to the Hoover depression days!" Gibson has angrily exclaimed. On the other hand, the Department of Agriculture this year has been granted a whopping $577,000,000, Commerce was given $172,480,000, and the military agencies, of course, received billions.

Besides the offices of the Secretary and the Solicitor, only six departmental divisions remain in being: the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of Apprenticeship, the Bureau of Labor Standards, the Women's Bureau, the Wage-Hour and Public Contracts Division, and a small bureau on the reemployment rights of veterans.

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All of these sections, except Apprenticeship, have been decimated.

Although right-wing Republicans and reactionary Southern Democrats are chiefly responsible for butchering the department, it should not be overlooked that Labor's prestige had already been lowered, to some degree, by certain actions of Roosevelt and Truman. The former, for example, shifted the Immigration Service, the Children's Bureau, and, for a time, the United States Employment Service, out of the department. And Truman appointed John R. Steelman as White House labor adviser, thus creating a kitchen-cabinet post overshadowing that of the Secretary of Labor.

BUT let us see what the Eightieth Congress itself did for the Department of Labor:

In a special section of the Taft-Hartley law, it yanked the important Conciliation Service out of Labor, and set it up as a new independent agency, the Mediation and Conciliation Service. In so doing, it submitted to the Tory clamor that, under Labor, the division had been subject to "partisan control" and that it was "not trusted" by employers. Yet Conciliation had established an average yearly record of settling 90 per cent of all industrial disputes.

Funds for the remaining services were drastically cut. The budget of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, oldest and largest unit in the department, was reduced twice. Not satisfied by the 40-per-cent slash voted in the first session of Congress, the meat-cleaver boys in the House demanded a further 35-per-cent slice in the second meeting. At this point, however, the Senate balked, partially in response to the complaints of business leaders, who declared that they, too, relied on the bureau's invaluable statistics on price levels, construction costs, employment, earnings, and other economic trends. The two chambers then settled on a compromise bill which pared the budget for the department as a whole by 13 per cent.

The shriveled budget now forces every section of the department to curtail operations. The statistical bureau will have to eliminate many of its vital studies. The Women's Bureau, sole agency in the government dealing with the problems of 17,000,000 working women, has had to close its field offices, as has Veterans Reemployment. Labor Standards is badly shaken. The Wage-Hour and Public Contracts Division, which administers minimum-wage and maximum-hours laws, will be able to inspect no more than 7 per cent each year of the 550,000 plants falling under its aegis.

THE worst was yet to come. Near the end of the second session, reactionaries in the House, tacking a rider onto an inapplicable appropriation bill, removed the USES from the department (to which it had been restored after the war) and merged it with an unemployment compensation bureau under the Federal Security Agency. The Employment Service, despised by anti-labor employers and disliked by jealous state employment administrators, had for years been one of the agencies most relied on by labor itself. For one thing, it had administered federal grants to the states for operating employment offices and unemployment-insurance facilities under Labor Department regulations. These standards were important: for instance, they specified that an idle worker could not be denied unemployment benefits if he refused to work in a strike-bound plant or in an open shop where he would be forced to drop his union membership. This sort of thing infuriated die-hard free-enterprisers, of course, and they had long agitated, through a professional lobbying organization, to have the USES transferred to the presumably more "neutral" FSA. A deluge of telegrams and telephone calls to members of Congress from local chambers of commerce and manufacturers' groups assured passage of the rider that effected the transfer, after some brief hesitation on the part of the Senate.

In the message that accompanied his veto of this action, the President stated that the Employment Service properly belonged in the Department of Labor and not in the FSA, which, he said, was concerned primarily with "health, welfare, and education." He reviewed the record of crimes committed against the department and concluded that this latest one would "reduce [Labor] to such a minor status as to raise seriously the question of the validity of its continuance as a separate department." The veto did not stick. It was so close to adjournment that even liberal Congressmen felt it hopeless to make a fight.

One Democratic Representative, however, John Fogarty of Rhode Island, took the opportunity to blast his colleagues for their "concerted move" to build up the FSA at the expense of Labor. The FSA, Fogarty pointed out, was created by the President in 1939 as a sort of catch-all organization. Into it, at that time, were tossed the Social Security Board, the Office of Education, the Public Health Service, Howard University, and a batch of miscellaneous welfare and educational services. Since then, the agency has been allowed to swallow more and more divisions of the Labor Department until, Fogarty declared, it might well swallow the department itself in a few years. And Fogarty's protests were echoed in the Senate, by progressive Republicans as well as Democrats. "We are going directly contrary to the pledges of the Republican platform of 1944," said George Aiken of Vermont.

He touched a sore spot. The G. O. P. would probably like to forget the plank in its 1944 platform which read: "The Department of Labor has been emasculated by the New Deal. Labor bureaus, agencies, and committees are spread far and wide . . . and have no semblance

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of systematic or responsible organization. All governmental labor activities must be placed under the direct authority and responsibility of the Secretary of Labor." These bold words, as one might guess, are not reiterated in the 1948 platform, and it is the Democrats who now promise to "rebuild and strengthen" the Department of Labor.

THE chief job of the new Secretary of Labor, between now and November, will be to stump for Truman and point to the Labor Department as a horrible example of Republican carnage.

In the long run, any Secretary who wants his department to be more than a name will have a hard battle. He will have to fight for adequate appropriations, for the restoration of the Conciliation and Employment Services to his jurisdiction, and for control over the unemployment compensation bureau in the FSA. He will want to advocate the establishment of a labor-extension service, along the lines of the agricultural-extension service, for the promotion of workers' education. Legislation for this purpose was pigeon-holed in the last regular session of Congress.

The new Secretary may also try, as Schwellenbach did, to bring the National Labor Relations Board into the department, at least on a "house-keeping" basis. That action, however, perhaps will have to wait until the Taft-Hartley law is repealed, else Labor would be administering an anti-labor law. Finally, the new Secretary will strive to get placed under one roof all the agencies dealing with labor now scattered among various parts of the government. In short, he will try to build his department into one possessing the prestige and power to carry out the objectives embodied in the law that created it. America's labor movement, which has come of age, deserves no less.

The "Spice Islands" Come of Age

BY ANDREW ROTH

Macassar, East Indonesia

WHEN the cadaverous Dutch delegate, Dr. Eelco van Kleffens, rose at the Security Council's hearings a year ago to ask that the state of East Indonesia be admitted as a witness in the Dutch-Indonesian dispute, many well-informed delegates looked puzzled: "East Indonesia" was a new name in political geography. Perhaps more people would have understood if he had spoken of the "Spice Islands," as he might have, for East Indonesia includes the fabulous isles of Ternate and Tidore, whose spices were considered so valuable in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that all the maritime states of Europe warred for their possession.

A scattering of emerald-green islands on almost a million square miles of azure water, East Indonesia lies between Java on the west and New Guinea on the east, between the Philippines on the north and Australia on the south. It has ten times the area of Holland and a slightly larger population.

On these isles, strange and exotic customs have grown as luxuriantly as their tropical vegetation. In Bali, whose beautiful scenery, handsome natives, and exquisite dances have made the island's name almost synonymous with paradise, the women still have the quaint idea that while they may not show their knees, it is quite proper to leave their breasts uncovered. In Bone, a princely state in the South Celebes, a hundred scarlet-robed priests precede the Rajah at all ceremonies, to drive away evil spirits. These priests not only dress like women but also pierce their ears, pad their breasts, and speak their special language in a high-pitched voice. They are permitted free entry into the bed chambers of the Rajah's unmarried daughters. At one time, they lived in cages behind his palace.

Bali is Hindu, Ambon and the Minahassa are Christian, and in some islands animism still prevails, but in most of them the people are Moslems. In the Minahassa, nineteen out of twenty can read, but elsewhere only one in twenty. While some spices are still exported, the main product is copra, or dried coconut kernel, almost all of which is raised by small farmers.

When the spice trade fell off, the Dutch turned their attention to Java and Sumatra, whose rubber, quinine, tobacco, tin, and petroleum became the new "riches of the Indies." The scattered eastern islands were referred to as the "Outer Provinces," and the Dutch did not even bother to establish direct military and political control in all of them until forty-two years ago. Even after 1906, the local feudal rulers were left as a façade, though Dutch officials actually ran their states. Small business remained in the hands of the Chinese middle-men, but large enterprises, such as inter-island shipping, became the monopoly of Dutch concerns.

When Dutch administrators returned here in 1945—

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many of them haggard men just released from Japanese prison camps—they found the area's importance greatly increased. Java and Sumatra, the pre-war seat of Dutch political and economic power, were in Republican hands. The Outer Provinces' copra, which had soared to more than fifty times its pre-war price, was virtually the only product the Dutch could export for dollars. Nationalism in these islands had not reached such intensity as in Java and Sumatra, but the Dutch had some difficulty in re-establishing their control. In 1946, the South Celebes were up in arms, young Balinese nationalists formed guerrilla bands in the mountains, and even the loyal Minahassan troops revolted because of unequal treatment. In the South Celebes, two rajahs, some two hundred nobles, and thousands of villagers were killed.

Even before the turbulence fully subsided, the Lieutenant Governor General, H. J. Van Mook, Holland's canny political architect here, hastened to erect the state of East Indonesia, with pro-Dutch Indonesians at its head. By setting up such states, Dr. Van Mook has hoped to give the lie to the Republican charge that the Dutch will not allow the Indonesians to rule themselves. Furthermore, in the event that a United States of Indonesia, including the Indonesian Republic, becomes a reality, he hopes to have some pro-Dutch states as component parts.

At the Den Passar conference of December, 1946, at which East Indonesia was set up, virtually all the delegates bore the Dutch stamp of approval, and Republican newspapers and newspapermen were banned. The Dutch-controlled Batavia government retained twenty-one powers for itself, and East Indonesia emerged with a pro-Dutch Balinese nobleman, Prince Soekawati, as President. Its Premier, D. M. Najamuddin, mayor of Macassar under the Japanese, had achieved a wide reputation as a procurer of Indonesian girls for the "entertainment" of Japanese troops. Last summer, while he was on his way home from Lake Success, where he had expressed approval of the Dutch military attack on the republic, he was unseated as Premier because of the wholesale corruption of his regime, and on his arrival was met by the police.

Although East Indonesia was the handiwork of Dr. Van Mook, and there is still strong pro-Dutch feeling here, a pro-Republican trend has grown in strength as the nationalist forces have shifted from armed insurgence to methods of political persuasion. At present, one can say the East Indonesian chariot of state has two wheels, one loyalist and one nationalist, and that the lynchpin holding them on is the new young Premier.

The most prominent member of the loyalist group is President Soekawati. He is surrounded by a "palace guard" of Dutch and pro-Dutch officials and draws most of his support from the feudal princes, who fear any real democratization, and from the loyalist groups in Ambon and the Minahassa. Fearful of the Moslem majority, these Christian communities have provided Holland's most faithful Indonesian troops.

The Dutch are hopeful that President Soekawati can be reelected, and a Dutch adviser sent from Batavia has suggested a constitution which will keep the power in his hands. Under this proposed constitution, the President would have power to issue decrees without the approval of Parliament, and originally it was hoped to make the Cabinet responsible only to him. Now the Dutch are advising that the Cabinet be made responsible to a Senate composed largely of rajahs and hereditary tribal chiefs. They seem to think Dutch influence will last longer if power is in the hands of the feudal princes, who can be expected to look increasingly to Dutch support against the rising power of the middle class. The Dutch call this an "American style" constitution because it has a strong President.

But the nationalist ideal of complete self-rule is still in the ascendancy here, and the young and educated look enviously toward the republic, where Indonesians rule themselves without Dutch supervision. While most of the top posts here have been turned over to Indonesians—along with the fancy uniforms and American cars that go with them—there is a persistent demand for posts that still remain in Dutch hands.

Resistance to Dutch influence is based on economic as well as political conditions. The price of the main export, copra, recently soared as high as $300 a ton but now is fluctuating at about $235 to meet the Philippine export figure. The many small growers who produce over 90 per cent of the crop only get about 40 per cent of this price from the Dutch-controlled Copra Fund, which has a monopoly of purchases here. Dutch officials say that much of the profit from the sale of copra has been used to establish a stabilization fund, but they will not show the Copra Fund's books and cannot fully refute the nationalist charge that the dollar credits resulting from copra sales have gone in large part to finance the Dutch military comeback in the Indies.

The main opposition comes from the Progressive Group in Parliament and the Union for Indonesian Freedom (G. A. P. K. I.), both of which are headed by Arnold Mononutu, a mild-mannered, French-educated, Christian copra grower whose reasonable nationalism and mild socialism date from pre-war days. Last winter, the Progressive Group, which includes all pro-Republican elements in Parliament, won almost unanimous support for an East Indonesian Good-Will Mission to the Republic. Headed by Mononutu, the mission visited Jokjakarta in February and convinced President Soekarno and other Republican leaders that East Indonesia is no longer a Dutch puppet state. On its return, it convinced East Indonesians that the republic is not the lawless state that pro-Dutch sources picture it.

Midway between the pro-Republican democratic na-

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tionalism of Mononutu's followers and the pro-Dutch feudalism of President Soekawati's supporters stands the twenty-nine-year-old Premier, Anak Agung Gde Agung. "Anak Agung" is a Balinese title which is translated literally as "Most Important Child," and many feel that the title is extremely appropriate. The young Premier has a strong belief in his state. He fears that if the centralization of the pre-war government is reconstituted, this area will again be neglected, and he has fought several successful battles with Batavia to increase its autonomy. He is laboriously trying to steer a course midway between the loyalists and the nationalists, largely because he feels it necessary to keep the new state from being rent asunder.

Anak Agung is Rajah of Gianyar himself and at least on one occasion appeared thoroughly conscious of his privileges. During the height of the anti-rajah guerrilla movement on Bali, he ordered all Gianyar's inhabitants to swear personal loyalty to him and burned the houses of those who refused. But now as Premier he has urged that the rajahs share their power with the people to prevent feeling against them from going too far. He wants to replace Dutch officials with Indonesians, provided the latter are qualified. He supported the sending of the Good-Will Mission to the Republic to satisfy the pro-Republican intellectuals whose support he needs, but his government is also participating in the Dutch-sponsored provisional Interim Government. "In the conflict between the Dutch and the republic," he explained to me, "we must remain neutral," thus admitting that a Dutch-Republican agreement is his best bet for keeping East Indonesia moving forward in peace.

The Philadelphia Book Seizures

BY HENRY S. HUNTINGTON

Philadelphia, August 7

PHILADELPHIA is now awaiting the verdict of the Federal District Court on three cases which grew out of the most extraordinary wholesale book seizures ever known in this country. In a series of raids on fifty-four bookstores and news-stands between March 20 and 25, the Philadelphia vice squad gathered up some two thousand copies of at least eighteen different books, among which were: "Sanctuary" (1931) and "The Wild Palms" (1939) by William Faulkner, "Tobacco Road" (1932) and "God's Little Acre" (1933) by Erskine Caldwell (also "Caldwell Caravan"), "Studs Lonigan" (1932-35) by James T. Farrell, "The Bishop's Jaegers" (1932) and "The Passionate Witch" (1941) by Thorne Smith, "Illicit" (1934) and "Male and Female" (1934) by Jack Woodford, pen name of Josiah Pitts Woolfolk; "End as a Man" (1947) by Calder Willingham, "Raintree County" (1948) by Ross Lockridge, Jr., "Never Love a Stranger" (1948) by Harold Robbins, pen name of Harold Rubin; "The Gilded Hearse" (1948) by Charles Gorham, and several books by Tiffany Thayer. Two weeks earlier, the Philadelphia police had seized James T. Farrell's "A World I Never Made" (1936). The list, it will be noted, is extremely diverse: some of the books are without any literary repute; others are well established as modern classics.

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The raids were distinguished not only by their wholesale character but by the fact that the books were seized without warrants; an unusual provision of the Pennsylvania law allows the police to take possession of obscene literature on sight. One bookdealer, Charles Praissman, according to the court testimony, felt forced by the attitude of the detectives to open his store, which he had closed for Saturday afternoon, so that the police could search the premises and confiscate any books that were on their list. The detectives not only refused to give receipts to the bookdealers for the books they took, on the ground that it was against their policy to do so, but forbade the dealers to put the titles on sale again and said they would revisit the stores to see that this edict was observed.

The list of "objectionable" books appears to have been compiled with almost childish naiveté. Six months before the raids, an energetic young Baptist minister, the Reverend Melvin M. Forney, told the head of the Philadelphia vice squad, Inspector Craig Ellis, that one of his parishioners thought "Studs Lonigan" an improper book. Gradually, complaints about some nineteen other books accumulated, and Inspector Ellis ordered his confidential clerk, a man with a high-school education, supplemented by evening classes, to read the books and report to him on their obscenity. By the middle of March, the clerk and Inspector Ellis had concluded that five of the twenty books were not obscene but that the others were. Without consulting any literary critic or psychologist, without getting any legal advice or telling his superiors, Inspector Ellis told his squad to gather in the "lewd" harvest.

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The city as a whole reacted sluggishly to the news. Since the demise of the *Record* last year, only three English-language daily newspapers appear in Philadelphia—the *Inquirer,* the *Evening Bulletin,* and the *Daily News*—and not one of them has much of the crusader about it. After the raids, the *Inquirer* mildly commented that a better method of procedure would have been to let the courts decide whether or not the books were obscene before they were seized. The *Evening Bulletin,* by editorial, cartoon, and letters from the public, appeared to approve the action of the police. Only after a strong protest from the bookseller's association did it give fair publicity to the views of the opponents of police censorship.

The representative of Wanamaker's proposed, with typical Philadelphia flaccidity, to return to the publishers any books to which the Philadelphia vice squad objected, but the Philadelphia Booksellers' Association as a whole determined to fight. The Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers of "Raintree County," which was the Book of the Month Club selection for January of this year, asked indeterminate damages and a temporary injunction to restrain the police from interfering with the sale of the book until the Federal District Court had passed on the question of its obscenity. The Vanguard Press as publisher of "Studs Lonigan" and James T. Farrell as its author, together with two booksellers, Mr. Praissman and the Doubleday Shop, joined in suits for a total of $200,000 damages against the director of public safety of Philadelphia, Inspector Ellis, and one of his vice-squad detectives, for the seizure of the book. Alfred A. Knopf as publisher and Harold Rubin as author brought suit against the same officials for $100,000 damages for the seizure of "Never Love a Stranger."

THE trials produced some significant testimony, especially that of two Roman Catholic priests. The Reverend Robert Sullivan, an Augustinian who had studied at Oxford University and now teaches at Villanova College, told the court that if the Villanova College library possessed a copy of Rabelais, he was sure it was in "the refrigerator"—"the refrigerator," he explained, being "a closed section which the student has to have special permission to get to." In his opinion, he added, "Rabelais would corrupt the Villanova students." Father John Donnelly, chaplain of the Roman Catholic students at the University of Pennsylvania, said in the course of the hearing on "Raintree County," "I told students that I wanted them to refrain from reading that book. . . . After I read the book I gave the orders."

R. Sturgis Ingersoll, cross-examining Father Donnelly, asked him whether he took the same position on the reading of Rabelais, Balzac, and Chaucer by the University of Pennsylvania students. "You will agree with me," the lawyer said, "that Rabelais was one of the great minds of the Renaissance, won't you?"

Father Donnelly: He is reputed to be such.

Mr. Ingersoll: All right. And do you think it is advisable to pull the iron curtain between one of the great minds of the Renaissance and your students . . . ?

Father Donnelly: I would answer that, yes.

Mr. Ingersoll: . . . Are you in favor of pulling down the iron curtain, barring free exchange of thought, between Tom Paine and your students?

Father Donnelly: Well, sir, yes. I will answer that yes.

Mr. Ingersoll: Between Thomas Jefferson and your students?

Father Donnelly: No, sir.

Mr. Ingersoll: Why not?

Father Donnelly: Well, I correct that, sir, because Tom Paine had a great influence over Thomas Jefferson, and like Tom Paine, Thomas Jefferson was a deist, too.

Mr. Ingersoll: You would not like your students to explore Thomas Jefferson's deism?

Father Donnelly: No, sir.

Mr. Ingersoll: Now Benjamin Franklin was a deist, wasn't he?

Father Donnelly: Yes, sir.

Mr. Ingersoll: And he was a vulgar old fellow in a good many ways, wasn't he?

Father Donnelly: Yes, sir.

Mr. Ingersoll: And he was anti-clerical in a good many ways, wasn't he?

Father Donnelly: To a degree, sir, yes.

Mr. Ingersoll: Do you pull down your iron curtain between your students and Benjamin Franklin's writings?

Father Donnelly: Oh no, sir. At the University of Pennsylvania we believe that Benjamin Franklin is our founder, and we have traditionally great respect for him.

Mr. Ingersoll: In other words, you don't mind being the chaplain of a university founded by a deist?

Father Donnelly: No, as long as I can feel that I can protect the students there from deism.

Mr. Ingersoll; From becoming familiar with Benjamin Franklin's views on deism?

Father Donnelly: Well, I would say, sir, that it is nigh impossible for me to protect them from all that deism.

Mr. Ingersoll: You do the best you can, though?

Father Donnelly: I do the best I can, sir.

On the other hand, the testimony of James T. Farrell, Sculley Bradley, professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, Philip Hicks, chairman of the English Department at Swarthmore, and others in behalf of Farrell's "Studs Lonigan" series presented a powerful argument for realism in literature. To some of the listeners at the court hearings, however, the most interesting witness in behalf of "Studs Lonigan" was a thirty-three-year old merchant seaman by the name of McHale. Up to the age of fifteen or so, his own experiences had paralleled

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those of Studs. When he was twenty-five, he read the book. It was a thrilling document to him. He found moral value in it, he testified. "It showed me some of the mistakes I made in my life," he said, "mistakes which I want to try to help my boys avoid, and . . . that is one of the reasons why I am going to have them read the Studs Lonigan series when they are a little older. I think the ordinary youngster going into high school should be mature enough to accept or reject anything like that if [he has] the proper background."

The cases are now before the court. Judge Guy K. Bard expects to hand down the decision on them in September. Meanwhile, the Philadelphia police are under injunction not to interfere in any way with the sale of "Raintree County," not to seize "Studs Lonigan" or "Never Love a Stranger," and not to seize books at either of Mr. Praissman's bookstores without a search-and-seizure warrant. Judge Bard's injunction, however, does not prevent the police from arresting booksellers for having really obscene books exposed for sale.

Russia, Plus and Minus

IV. THE DILEMMA OF SOVIET ARTISTS

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

London, July

SOVIET home propaganda is largely composed of two elements: a call to civic duty, and flattery. The Russians are not by nature a disciplined people, and in pre-revolutionary days, while there was an elementary patriotism, there was little or no sense of citizenship. Today, there is still a great deal of lawlessness and irresponsibility—thieving, for instance, is still a very common failing—but the government has been trying, through every possible means, to create a sense of pride in being a Soviet citizen. The war has greatly helped in this: the official stories of the war now being written tend to convince the Soviet reader that the Soviet Union won the war against Nazi Germany practically single-handed. To be told this, day after day—to be told, also, that the Soviet Union has by far the most advanced form of society, and the best literature, and the best scientists—imbues the people with a strong feeling of satisfaction. The propaganda often becomes absurd: for instance, when *Pravda* says, in all seriousness, that penicillin was really discovered by the Russians in 1871, but that its practical development was retarded by poor scientific equipment before the revolution, and that the British have only refined a Russian invention.

Yet there is no doubt that a Soviet way of life is developing that the people regard as superior to all others. "Classless society" is not altogether an empty phrase; certain groups, it is true, have been granted economic privileges for serving the state well, but the differences in accumulated wealth have diminished since the monetary reform of last year. There are no murmurs when a chief engineer or a general is given a three-room flat in a new block in Moscow. When Russians speak of their way of life being more "democratic" than ours, what they mean is that "class conventions" and "distinctions" have almost completely disappeared in the U. S. S. R., and that the level of education, the standard of dress, and, above all, the manner in which people talk to each other tends to grow increasingly uniform. Little indications of class differences like "yes, sirs" and "no, sirs" do not exist in Russia today.

The "dignity of citizenship" was not cultivated among ordinary people in Tsarist Russia; what the Soviet government is trying to do—and not unsuccessfully—is to create in its citizens, in a short time, that sense of importance and dignity which the British have developed only after several centuries. And the goal of this propaganda is more akin to British ideals of citizenship than to the ideas the Nazis tried to plant in every German's head—though Soviet methods, in this regard, are often singularly reminiscent of those that extoled the *Herrenvolk*.

LITERATURE is now very largely directed to creating model citizens for this campaign. One may well say that current Soviet writing is rubbish compared with that of the great era ending with Gorki. Sholokhov, for instance, a magnificent writer who deals with men and women of flesh and blood, has published practically nothing for many years—and may not be heard from again until the party line on literature has changed, if it ever does. And one occasionally meets Russians who insist they "won't read anything later than Gorki." But this attitude is no longer widespread. Zhdanov recently expressed satisfaction at current literary efforts, and boasted that editorial offices were "bursting with manu-

This is the last in Mr. Werth's series of uncensored articles from London appraising the Soviet Union today.

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scripts of novels fit for publication." And it is true that character-forming books are being produced on a large scale, and are being read. They are also the subject of public discussions in schools and factories, and on the collective farms, so, willy-nilly, everybody has either read them or heard a lot about them.

It is easy to make the charge of primitivism against this literature, and, upon reflection, one finds the nearest equivalent to the modern Soviet novel in the tragedies of Corneille, with their eternal conflict between love and duty, between the individual ego and the state. A recent article by P. Gromov in *Zvezda,* a leading monthly literary magazine, discusses two Stalin Prize novels by Vera Panova. One of these books deals with a group of people on a hospital train, the other with various conflicts inside a factory. Using them as a point of departure, Gromov tries to explain the fundamentals of current Soviet fiction and the differences between pre-revolutionary and contemporary Soviet novels. "The hero of present-day art," he writes, "is born into a society where class differences have been liquidated. The hero's character does not develop in his struggle with society, as in the literature of the past, or with certain hostile groups, as in our literature of the twenties. . . . Society has now given the hero every chance for his individual development, and if he fails, it is his own fault." He then goes on to declare that "some of our writers have tended to oversimplify matters by saying, in effect, that since the hero is a Soviet citizen, he must automatically be good," and he argues that there are degrees of good Soviet citizenship.

The people in Panova's novels, and other good novels, are measured by a new yardstick: What is the value to society of each one, and how does it vary? "This criterion," says Gromov, "is not something outside them, but within; it is to be found in their attitude to their work." Speaking of the staff of the hospital train in the first Panova book, he explains that "to [most of] these people, work is not a drudgery but a matter of personal honor." But one of the characters, a very able doctor, is, at heart, totally indifferent to his work and deeply interested in his personal affairs. "Socialism is expressed in a man's passionate attitude toward his work," says Gromov. "The development of a Socialist personality is by no means easy, for, in creating a new society, . . . people also have to recreate themselves." The highest manifestation of this effort in the Panova book, he points out, is that embodied in Danilov, the party member who acts as a spiritual guide to the entire staff of the train. It is Danilov who comes into sharp conflict with the egoistic doctor.

Books are interesting to the Russians as part of their education, as it were. For relaxation, they turn to Gogol or Gorki. In the satellite states, there is much resistance to the party-line form of literature. One Rumanian Communist recently said to me, as we discussed Simonov's play on the American lords of the press: "It's a funny thing: when Sartre writes about completely unreal things, he makes them sound real; when Simonov writes about real things, he makes them seem unreal." Soviet literary critics, however, claim that Russian novels will become increasingly subtle psychologically. One wonders.

OF CURRENT painting, the less said the better. Judging from the recent Stalin awards, the two principal criteria of merit in painting are subject matter and photographic likeness—usually of Lenin or Stalin. But there have been some interesting developments in the cinema. "The Little Humped-Back Horse," an astonishing and totally apolitical cartoon film, has been hailed by Americans in Moscow as being "as good as Disney at his best." "The Third Blow" is brilliantly made. It is a very significant movie, politically speaking, dealing with the reconquest of the Crimea, and glorifies Stalin and the party at the expense of the generals; at one critical moment in the film, when the generals do not know what to do next, they phone Stalin at the Kremlin, and he gives them the correct—and simple—answer.

A GREAT deal of recently published material throws new light on what really happened when the party violently assaulted Russia's leading composers—Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Miaskovsky, Khachaturian, and others —and indiscriminately charged them with "formalism." The most extraordinary document is the verbatim report of the three days' meeting of composers and others prominent in the music world who were summoned before the Central Committee of the Communist Party by Zhdanov in January. Prokofiev and Miaskovsky were absent, or present but silent. Shostakovich, obviously shaken by Zhdanov's remarks and the whole atmosphere of the meeting, made two brief, nervous, and, in the main, irrelevant speeches.

Other remarks varied widely. There was the boorish harangue of Zakharov, who has written a few popular songs and claims that popular songs and cinema music are the only successful Soviet works. He damned with particular viciousness all the symphonic music written by the "Big Four" as utterly useless and "unwanted by the people." There were speeches made by members of the other camp, notably Knipper, to the effect that the "Big Four"—despite some "formalist lapses"—had produced "the greatest glory of Russian musical culture." Zhdanov supported the popular-music school of thought; and this, of course, was apparent from the famous decree of February 10 which followed the meeting. Certain very questionable aesthetic or Marxian principles were laid down: Zhdanov, for instance, said that it would be a very good thing if modern composers wrote "like Glinka and Tchaikovsky."

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SOON after the Central Committee meeting and the issuance of the decree, there was a meeting of the composers themselves. At this gathering, as reported at the time, Shostakovich made an apologetic statement. Since then, *Soviet Music*—under new management, of course—has published a much fuller account of the meeting. Among its more interesting features are the definition of formalism made by N. Y. Brusova, the full text of Prokofiev's letter explaining his attitude toward the decree, and Zakharov's praise of Zhdanov's qualifications as a judge of music.

What is "formalism"? Brusova had this to say:

> It is customary to regard formalism as lack of ideas, lack of content, emptiness of form, without reference to reality. At music schools, pupils are sometimes taught to write such empty exercises in . . . sound combinations. But when we speak of formalism now, we mean something different. One cannot describe the work of Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Miaskovsky, or Khachaturian as being divorced from life and reality. Nevertheless, their work contains a formalist element, sometimes a formalist basis. We somehow feel that something prevents these works from penetrating simply and directly into our artistic consciousness. Socialist realism does not require from the artist some kind of abstract objectivity; it does require from him an understanding of the true roads of life. In many of these works, there is not insufficient vision, but distorted vision. Formalism appears whenever the artist does not exercise sufficient creative will to follow along the fundamental roads of life; when he imitates bourgeois modernism and has not the courage or the strength to look our great future straight in the face. It is then that he is apt to replace mighty, majestic, and simple images by an accumulation of chaotic sounds.

Prokofiev's letter, written with great dignity, said that he welcomed the decree as it "clearly separated the healthy tissues from the unhealthy." In recent years, he continued, he had given much thought to the question of formalism, with which he had become infected through contact with the West. He had searched for a clearer and more significant language, and thought he had largely succeeded in finding it in many of his recent works like the "Ode to Stalin," "Romeo and Juliet," "Alexander Nevsky," "Cinderella," and his Fifth Symphony. "If some of my works," he added, are still "marked by formalism, the reason must probably be sought in a certain self-complacency, and in an insufficient realization of the fact that our people don't need it."

Then he came up with a crack that cut some of the other speakers to the quick: "I never had any doubt how important a melody is. But the most difficult thing for a composer is to create a melody intelligible even to the uninitiated, and at the same time original. Here, the composer is beset by the danger of being trivial or imitative. It is easier to compose complicated melodies; the composer must always be on guard against writing melodies that are too complicated, on the one hand, or cheap rubbish, on the other."

Zakharov argued that the big composers were not familiar enough with folk songs. Zhdanov, he said, knew them better. "When Comrade Zhdanov was asked whether he really knew six hundred songs by heart," Zakharov related, "he replied, 'I would hesitate to say I know six hundred, but I know about three hundred songs.' And how well he knows them! When he visited our choir, we presented him with an album of songs. On the following day, he returned the album with variants of the texts of several of the compositions written in his own hand. Comrade Zhdanov is not a professional musician, but if our composers followed his example, we would say that they really knew our folk songs."

What is to happen now is not altogether clear. All the work of the "formalists" has obviously not been damned forever: Prokofiev's two ballets, "Romeo and Juliet" and "Cinderella," continue to be performed at the Bolshoi Theater, and the Conservatory's concert programs for next season, while composed almost exclusively of classical music—chiefly Tchaikovsky and Beethoven—do contain a few works by Prokofiev, Miaskovsky, and Khachaturian, though none by Shostakovich. On May 27, however, Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony was unexpectedly performed at the Tchaikovsky Hall.

Drawing by Golden

Miaskovsky—who, with Prokofiev, ignored the composers' congress—has taken the whole affair very badly, and is said to be a sad and sick old man. Many speakers at the congress said that it was nonsense to treat his music as formalist, or decadent, or un-Russian, but the new pundits of the composers' union have been hard-hearted. His high professional standards are clearly as irritating to the popular-song writers as their compositions are distasteful to him.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

The Field

Bland and supple under the summer sun,
a bronze-green sea beneath the hull of the wind,
the meadow moves: the meadow, a lazy wave,
takes the shadow of bird, of tree, of cloud.

There is another meadow farther under,
inverted—*the crawling quarreling seething roots,*
strangers to wind and light, alive in the damp,
threading the darkness, troubled by worm and mole.

All the long spring the stalks were busy growing,
while the moods of the sky moved over. Now they rise
to their true symmetry, grace from hidden distortion,
from the sucking filaments, crabbed and unappeased.

Fed by their appetite, the field, translated,
responsive, calm, lies ready to receive
the wide-winged shadows, the weight of the wind, the sunlight—
this field that the other, in darkness, keeps alive.

CONSTANCE CARRIER

Huxley Was Here Before

APE AND ESSENCE. By Aldous Huxley. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

THE contemporary satirist is in the unfortunate position of being almost forced to go too far. Buchenwald and Hiroshima, Belsen and Nagasaki make the vilest individual human actions seem almost like acts of compassion—every debutante implies an Irma Kraus and wide-eyed innocence the baby-face killer. Evelyn Waugh has recently been driven to embalming and the funeral parlor, and now we have Aldous Huxley back in a new world far less brave and far more bestial than the one he gave us sixteen years ago. Malthusian belts have been replaced by raw-hide whips, the "feelies" and the most enjoyable unbridled license by five days of orgy and three hundred and sixty of unadulterated hell.

The book begins on the day of Gandhi's assassination—in a film studio—and Huxley recapitulates his views on non-attachment: "It is not at the center, not from within the organization that the saint can cure our regimented insanity; it is only from without, at the periphery." Gandhi died, in fact, for having got himself involved in the "sub-human mass madness of nationalism." Then, by a rather abrupt transition effected by means of a film scenario, he presents us with the spectacle of the human race in the guise of apes speeding toward their own destruction, which they accomplish—ah, did you guess—by dividing themselves into two sides, each with an Albert Einstein of its own, and pulling a switch. Time passes.

The twenty-second century finds a party of New Zealand scientists disembarking at what was once Los Angeles. New Zealand, being strategically unimportant, has been spared and has preserved its culture, though the inhabitants have been isolated by radio-activity ever since the Thing. Dr. Poole, an innocent botanist with a strong Oedipus complex, is separated from the rest of the scientific party and is captured by three inhabitants of the Los Angeles district; the other scientists are driven off the mainland and Dr. Poole is left to his fate—a highly unpleasant one. Rather quickly cured of his Oedipus complex, he is further frustrated by the custom of the country where the women have signs reading NO placed strategically over each erogenous zone. The inhabitants have other unattractive ways—they worship Belial, impale live babies on spits, and lead an inhibited, ape-like existence—dedicated to misery and frustration.

It is absurd to attempt to deny that Mr. Huxley's message is anything but pertinent, urgent, and true—rampant nationalism is obviously the enemy of progress, humanity has recently displayed the ape within with a vengeance, and moreover seems firmly bent on self-destruction. One does begin to wonder, however, whether a statement of such obvious fact, no matter how wittily and trenchantly made, does not tend to enter the realm of platitude unless it implies a solution—a means of escape—more convincing than a blend of Eastern mysticism and Western technology. The world has been dying since its inception, and nuclear fission only gives man the means to speed the process—it does not present any new philosophical problem. Splitting the atom could as well be a cause for optimism as for pessimism: the greater the knowledge of science, the greater the chance of scientific thought presenting an irrefutable and universal logic governing every field of activity and leading to the establishment of a sane world order.

The reiteration in this book of Huxley's deeply pessimistic views leads one to believe that in withdrawing, as he has done, to the periphery, he has put himself outside any real compassion for humanity—which always implies a certain optimism—without having gained any particularly enlightening insight in compensation.

ANTHONY BOWER

The Blight of Segregation

THE NEGRO GHETTO. By Robert Weaver. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

WORLD WAR II increased the work opportunities and the income of Negroes, but it also ripened a fruit—the black ghetto—which imparts to these gains a somewhat rancid taste. With the emigration of countless Negroes from the South during the 1940's, the tendency toward residential segregation, which originated with the first mass movement northward in the early twentieth century, was completed.

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Today, the Negro ghetto is as typical of our larger centers as the Jewish ghetto once was of European cities. And within this pale fester all of the diseases characteristic of such malignant social organisms: congestion, property blight, vice, crime, physical and psychological debilitation, and varying degrees of racial tension.

Dr. Robert Weaver, who supplied the socio-economic brief for the argument against restrictive convenants before the United States Supreme Court, believes such covenants to be the major means through which an unholy alliance of real-estate associations, financial institutions, and title companies brought the Negro ghetto into being. He carefully points out, however, that the restrictive covenant could not have become so deadly without the sanction of the frightened, prejudiced, upper-class white property owner, whose tastes and attitudes determine real-estate codes, building practices, and the tastes and attitudes of the white masses. Among the latter, the fear took root that once a colored family moved into a neighborhood, property and property values were bound to deteriorate. Panic-stricken before an imagined black "invasion," they fled the neighborhood. Into the vacuum moved more home-hungry Negroes than could be adequately accommodated. Soon, the area was cordoned off as a "black belt," building and municipal services were curtailed, and, if property did deteriorate, it was not because of the pigmentation of the new occupants, but simply because a slum had been artificially created.

When a new factor, the federal government, entered the picture, the situation, instead of growing better, became worse. Federal housing agencies collaborated with private real-estate interests to perpetuate residential segregation, both in public projects and in government-financed private developments. The Federal Housing Authority's "Underwriting Manual," which categorized Negroes as an "adverse influence," not only provided restrictive covenanters with new ideological justification, but was instrumental in "barring Negroes from the bulk of new housing that was constructed from 1934 to 1940." So charges Dr. Weaver. Thereafter, while colored soldiers were fighting for democracy abroad, colored war-workers at home, who were receiving but a droplet of war-housing, were, in the main, being shunted off into already congested ghettoes or driven to develop new ones which, needless to say, soon became equally crowded.

In soberly evaluating this situation, Dr. Weaver recognizes that the black belt cannot be eliminated unless there is a concerted attack upon the housing problem in general. Hence, he stresses the overall housing shortage as the first obstacle to be overcome. In this connection, he urges the development of additional housing on new land, the construction of large projects, and considerably increased government participation.

Taking to task the planners who dream of ideal future cities without making provisions for minority groups therein, the author contends that it is precisely in areas of new residential development where the greatest strides toward racial democracy can be made. For "in a new community, opposition to minority groups has not crystallized," and it is therefore possible to lay down racially democratic patterns from the outset. He believes, further, that "democratic neighborhoods, not standardized for one kind of population, whether as to income, family type . . . or race," are essential to the future well-being of our democracy itself.

Meanwhile, Dr. Weaver, who is no misty-eyed dreamer (he has had long experience with the United States Housing Authority, the War Manpower Board and Chicago's Committee On Race Relations), points to the Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago as an example of how immediate progress can be made. Partly out of the desire for self-preservation, for the hospital is situated in the heart of the black belt, Michael Reese has undertaken a multi-million-dollar program of razing blocks of surrounding slums and constructing there a medium-rent project of mixed white and colored occupancy. The hospital is working on the theory—which has long since been proved in fact—that the two races can literally live next door to each other in complete harmony. Unless that theory receives widespread practical application, the internal pressures building within the Negro ghetto will inevitably produce external explosions.

DANIEL JAMES

Diplomatic Drama

DIPLOMATIC PRELUDE, 1938-1939. By L. B. Namier. The Macmillan Company. $5.

IN THE spring of 1940, L. B. Namier, professor of modern history at the University of Manchester, England, began a comparative study of the White and Blue and Yellow Books that had just been published by the governments of Europe's warring nations. These apologies lent themselves, by their very omissions, colorations, and contradictions, to a critical analysis in search of the historical truth. Later, the scope of the study was widened by supplementing it with material from such other sources—memoirs, press reports, captured documents—as were available by December 15, 1946. The result is a highly valuable, though necessarily incomplete, record of the frantic diplomatic activities engendered by Hitler's march into Prague and his subsequent demands upon Poland.

Professor Namier has done an excellent job of arranging the material at his command. Against the background of pre-Hitler state relationships in Europe, he traces the development, from alarm to crisis to catastrophe, through the complex labyrinth of the daily criss-cross negotiations within and between Berlin, Warsaw, London, Paris, and, last but not least, Moscow. From a welter of often ambiguous documents and talk, there emerges with force a fascinating drama of greed, cowardice, idealism, treason, and folly.

Most complete treatment is given to the British-German, British-Polish, and German-Polish conversations. Less satisfying, for want of authentic material, is the presentation of the crucial British-French consultations with Russia in which the Western powers pressed for a renewal of the Triple Entente without acceding to Russia's far-reaching demands for westward expansion as payment in kind. And as a matter of fact, Finland, the Baltic states, Poland, and Rumania feared Stalin's embrace no less than Hitler's blows.

Because he had still less detailed information at hand, Professor Namier's report on the German-Russian negotiation, which culminated in the Hitler-Stalin pact that shook the world and

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made the war an immediate certainty could not be definitive. But a few incontrovertible facts became clear. Stalin began to make overtures to Nazi Germany at the very moment, following the subjugation of Czechoslovakia, when the disappointed appeasers realized they would have to fight Hitler after all. When the overtures turned into negotiations (conducted in utmost secrecy, parallel to Soviet negotiations with the Western powers), Hitler did not hesitate to be very generous with what did not belong to him. He was motivated by his sole fear—a two-front war; in addition, he was under the pressure of time. Poland had to be attacked without delay to prevent the fall rains from bogging down the Blitzkrieg machinery. Stalin, like everyone else, knew this, and took advantage of it—or what he thought to be advantage. The first of the cynical collaborators, he signed up with Hitler on August 24. On September 1, the Führer marched. Calling everyone else "warmonger" will not change the historical fact that it was Stalin who gave the green light for World War II.

Professor Namier seems to be inclined to the common notion that Moscow was still afraid of a British-French-German coalition after the "peace-in-our-time" Prime Minister had already, and very recklessly, committed Great Britain to the protection of Poland and Rumania. This theory assumes a naiveté in Stalin and the men of the Politburo that I am unable to detect. It seems more plausible that Stalin decided as he did for the very opposite reason—because he had become convinced that England and France were in earnest when they repeatedly warned Hitler that an attack on Poland would mean war. Having plans of his own, Stalin pushed Hitler westward, assigning to himself the part of *tertius gaudens*. His overestimation of France's ability to resist Hitler's onslaught is another matter altogether. And as to moral scruples and Litvinov's highly principled declarations, the choice between fascism and democracy became, during the next two years—as after World War II—a mere "question of taste," as the present Foreign Commissar has put it.

The author intends to bring further editions of his work up to date and in balance. To the four hundred pages of his main study, he adds a section, to be continued, called "Episodes and Men" which provides "packing space" for complementary material that cannot be incorporated into the book proper. This section now contains four excellent essays: The Ides of March, dealing with Hitler's rape of Czechoslovakia; An Interloper in Diplomacy, presenting Birger Dahlerus, Goering's private messenger, who, during the last critical hours, flew back and forth between the Wilhelmstrasse and Downing Street; France and Poland, a monograph on the unhappy relationship of those two countries; and Ciano and Mussolini, a very readable discussion of Ciano's diary.

Professor Namier has the competence and the disposition to carry out the task he has set himself. The probability is that "Diplomatic Prelude" will develop into a standard work on one facet of a period that will present a problem of interpretation, to historians and others, for many generations to come.

FRANZ HOELLERING

Some Recent Novels

THIS VERY EARTH. By Erskine Caldwell. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. $2.75.

THE DISTANT TROJANS. By Virginia Hathaway Chapman. Random House. $2.75.

THE BLOOD OF OTHERS. By Simone de Beauvoir. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE By Robert Van Gelder. Doubleday. $3.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER. By Graham Greene. Viking. $3.

"THIS VERY EARTH" reads startlingly like Sartre's play, "The Respectful Prostitute," in the form in which it is now appearing at the Cort—that is, like a monstrous caricature of an unpleasant actuality. Caldwell appears merely to be parodying his earlier novels with a lack of subtlety which reminds me of the worst kind of nineteenth-century melodrama. All that is missing is a villain with black mustachios. As a matter of fact, there *is* a smooth Congressman who tells all the girls how much he needs a woman's sympathy.

There are some very amusing scenes in Mrs. Chapman's first novel, "The Distant Trojans." Her Westchester interiors are excellent. But when she makes her hero philosophize about what has happened, or rather, has not happened to him, the writing becomes pretentious. He is no Hamlet, and there is too much of the Hamlet manner about him.

I wish I could be enthusiastic about Simone de Beauvoir's "The Blood of Others." There is something veracious about this novel of the French Resistance, with its painstaking elucidation of the Dostoievskian theme: "Each of us is responsible for everything, and to every human being." It has real compassion. But for all its subject and theme, it does not move perceptibly, largely because it reads as if it had been written only from intelligent conviction. It has one of the most preposterously disagreeable heroines in modern fiction, and not all the efforts of the author can make her as significant as we are told she is.

Robert Van Gelder's "Important People" is being widely advertised as "the novel that soaks the rich." This assertion needs qualification. His rich are a terrifying collection of neo-fascists. He soaks the Jews and Negroes, too, although it was clearly not his intention to do so. Mr. Van Gelder's rich young man suffers from the same vague feelings of guilt which motivated the hero of Charles Jackson's recent novel. The glitter of his Manhattan interiors does not conceal his confusion about the root of this guilt.

George Orwell's review of Graham Greene's "The Heart of the Matter" in the *New Yorker* of July 17, with which I agree completely, demolished ably and at length recent attempts to place Greene as a major novelist. His admirers appear to have mistaken the sociological interest of his fiction for greatness.

ERNEST JONES

A New Nation

THE INDONESIAN STORY. By Charles Wolf, Jr. An Asia Book. The John Day Company. $3.

THE establishment of the Republic of Indonesia, claiming jurisdiction over an area of 700,000 square miles and a population of 70,000,000, came as a surprise even to people familiar with Indonesian history. The nineteenth-century revolts had come from sectional minorities, Batak or Atchennese, and

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prior to the second world war, there seemed to be no genuine revolutionary tendencies in Indonesia. "The Indonesian Story" is an analysis of the founding of the republic by an author who was American vice consul at Batavia and knows the background well.

Indonesia has a rich and varied heritage. The Hindu kingdom of Taruma, in Western Java, brought in the ancient Indian culture more than twelve hundred years ago. In the eighth and ninth centuries, missionaries introduced Buddhism. In the fourteenth century, the Brahman and Buddhist strains were fused, under the Madjapahit Empire which extended from New Guinea to Sumatra. Mohammedanism came into Java by the end of the fifteenth century. The Portuguese then began to penetrate the area—in the sixteenth century—but were ousted by the Dutch in 1594. The Dutch colonial structure was maintained until the time of World War II, when the Japanese came in and took possession.

The Indonesians suffered more during four years of Japanese rule than they had suffered in three hundred and fifty years under the Dutch. It was for this reason that the seeds of nationalism germinated so quickly. The intellectual leaders of the Indonesians prepared to resist post-war restoration of colonialism in the islands, and on August 17, 1945, determined men proclaimed the Republic of Indonesia:

> Since independence is the right of every nation, any form of subjugation in this world is contrary to humanity and justice and must be abolished. The struggle for Indonesian independence has reached a stage of glory in which the Indonesian people are led to the gateway of an independent, united, sovereign, just, and prosperous Indonesian state.

Mr. Wolf records the workings of this young republic during a turbulent period of political and economic struggle. Like every liberated country, Indonesia is plagued by the factionalism and disunity resulting from the violent disagreement of extreme right, left, and moderate groups. Mr. Wolf has had to deal with a delicate and complicated situation. His account may not please any of the groups involved, but he has obviously made a sincere effort to be objective, and to present the viewpoints of both the Indonesians and the Dutch. His book provides an excellent introduction to the new nation of southwestern Asia.

YOUNGHILL KANG

Records

B. H. HAGGIN

BEETHOVEN'S Quartet Opus 18 No. 6, one of the most delightful of his early works, has been recorded by the Budapest Quartet for Columbia (Set 754, $4.75). The performance is everything it should be in pace, tone, and ensemble (except for one momentary loss of rhythmic precision in the development of the first movement), but its recorded sound is without the warmth and luster of the English Decca recording of the Griller Quartet that I discussed last week, and the violins are unpleasantly sharp even on the machine of limited range that I am using these days.

Columbia also has issued a new recording of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 made by Casadesus and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy (Set 744, $6). More happens in the work than Casadesus gives evidence of being aware of with his perfectly executed smoothness of phrasing. The orchestra's playing is a pleasure and is well reproduced; the piano comes off the records dull, and in quiet passages —notably in the slow movement—as though it were off-stage. Casadesus's cadenzas are not an intrusion, but they are also not effective, and are pointless when there are such excellent ones by Beethoven himself.

Schumann's "Liederkreis" Opus 39, recorded for Columbia by Traubel, with Coenraad Bos at the piano (Set 752, $5.90), is the set of twelve songs to which the well-known and very fine "Waldesgespräch" and "Mondnacht" belong; and it turns out that only two of the others—"Auf einer Burg" and "In der Fremde"—deserve to be better known than they are. Traubel seems to be concerned chiefly with the effective deployment of her voice, for which she is willing to slow up a tempo or distend a phrase; and she has this much justification—that the voice is more agreeable to the ear than it has been in other recent performances, being employed for the most part in its lustrous lower range and with only slight tremolo and shrillness in the upper range. The recorded sound of the piano is weak and strangely altered, achieving on the last side a remarkable imitation of a guitar.

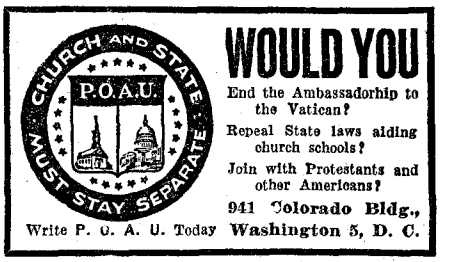
To judge by what comes off the record (72588-D, $1.25), the Sadler's Wells Orchestra isn't one that is capable of the brilliance called for by the Overture to Smetana's "Bartered Bride," which it plays under the direction of Lawrence Collingwood.

As far as I am concerned, some excellent playing by the Little Orchestral Society under Thomas K. Scherman and excellent recording are wasted on David Diamond's "Music for Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' " (Set 751, $4.75).

I would say that Mercury also had wasted the superlative playing of the oboist Mitchell Miller with the Saidenberg Little Symphony and remarkably fine recording on Vaughan Williams's Concerto for oboe and strings (Set DM-7, $5.25). And maybe Smetana's "Wallenstein's Camp" has an importance for Czechs that justifies the excellent recording of it made by the Czech Philharmonic under Rafael Kubelik; but for my American ears the work doesn't justify being issued here by Mercury (Set DM-11, $3.94).

As for its set (DM-10, $7.83) of Khachaturian's Violin Concerto, its only point is that it introduces to Americans the remarkable playing of the Soviet Russian violinist David Oistrakh. But can it be that he is condemned to play only this kind of music, and has made no recordings of Bach or Mozart or Beethoven? The orchestra, the Russian State Symphony, plays well under Alexander Gauk; and the recorded sound is excellent, thanks to a skilful re-recording job by Mercury.

When I had reached this point three additional Columbia sets arrived. In one (758, $4.75) Columbia reissues a number of recordings of superb songs of the Auvergne magnificently sung by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Madeleine Grey to orchestral accompaniments arranged by Cantaloube that are a little ornate but not too disturbingly so. Another (756, $4.75) offers Nos. 1, 3, 8, 10, and 15 of Dvorak's Slavonic Dances—which are among his finest and most engaging works—arranged (so the labels say) by Szell, and performed by him with the Cleveland Orchestra. What his arrangement consists of I am not in a position to say; his performances, however, often drive the music too fast and too hard; and their recorded sound is bright but cold. The old Victor recordings of the Talich-Czech Philharmonic performances are the ones to acquire if they are available again, as I believe I have heard they are.

As for the third (757, $7.25), it offers the first two of the four books of Albéniz's "Iberia" for piano—with "Evocacion," "El Puerto," "Fête-Dieu à Seville, "Rondeña," "Almería," and "Triana"—played by Arrau. These delightful pieces are among the few successful examples of sophisticated treatment of folk material. Arrau is a pianist without the spontaneous warmth and grace which the music calls for; and what he produces artificially is sometimes a convincing substitute and sometimes overdone. Nor do the records produce the warm, lustrous piano sound which the music should have.

Both the Dvorak and the Albéniz performances are under-recorded, so that to get the right volume one must take increased surface-noise.

On further thought I consider the old Roth Quartet version of Mozart's K.387 preferable to the new Griller Quartet version with its crudities and affectations.

CONTRIBUTORS

ANTHONY BOWER is on the staff of *New Directions*.

DANIEL JAMES is a member of the executive of the New York Council for a Permanent FEPC.

YOUNGHILL KANG, a native of Korea who has lived in this country for many years, recently returned from a tour of duty in Korea, where he was Adviser to the Director of Civil Information.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Rebuilding Japan: the Moral Issue

Dear Sirs: Yole Granada's article in your last issue, Should We Rebuild Japan?, offers an admirable and informed summary of the internal pressures in the Japanese economy, but shows a callous and amoral disregard of the issues of World War II and the rights of the other nations of Asia. It is an analysis that would delight the hearts of Tojo and the Mitsuis, for it vindicates every aspect of Japanese imperialism except its recourse to arms. It is perfectly true that the Japanese economy, for a long time, has not been viable. It is perfectly true that the basic Japanese problem is population pressure. It is perfectly true that the Japanese are already getting the utmost, or nearly the utmost, out of their natural resources. It is perfectly true that the United States is footing a $600,000,000 annual bill to meet the Japanese food deficit. And it is perfectly true that most American officials propose to dispose of this financial burden by finding an export market for Japan's industrial products.

But this is exactly what Japan's militarists tried to do. I have heard more than one Japanese predict that the American army would win for Japan what its own army failed to win. Is it necessary to remind anyone that the proximate cause of "the China incident" was the Chinese resistance, by boycott, to Japanese economic invasion? Is it necessary to say that the people of China, not to mention the Philippines, Indo-China, Thailand, and India, aspire to economic self-determination even more than to political self-determination? Is it necessary to point out the cynical self-interest of those Americans who propose, as Miss Granada does, to make Japan "the workshop of Asia"?

In any ultimate moral sense, Japan is a Chinese problem. Since China, at present, is patently incapable of handling any problem, let alone Japan, the United States should act merely as the trustee of Chinese interests. I am not sentimental about the Chinese, and happen to have greater liking and trust for the Japanese. I trust the Japanese, in fact, sufficiently to believe that they will not again resort to force unless as auxiliaries of the United States. But the interests of the Chinese and the principles of justice happen to coincide.

On the level of policy, this calls for: (1) The doctrine of equal help to all nations of Asia, which means strengthening industry elsewhere as much as we strengthen it in Japan; (2) the enforced revocation of militaristic laws against the dissemination of birth-control information and the imposition, not of birth control itself, but of a policy in which the resources, population growth, and emigration prospects of Japan will have some relationship (Miss Granada to the contrary notwithstanding, the day is long since past when any nation can afford to disregard demographic problems); (3) a steadfast, long-term fight against racial, religious, or national qualifications in the immigration policies of any nation anywhere on earth. The Japanese, as we have learned, make highly desirable citizens.

Miss Granada is inadequately informed on the birth-control question in Japan. Birth control was extensively practiced in the twenties, and virtually halted the population increase. But the militarists, as all militarists do, wanted their cannon fodder. We have only to revoke their regulations of 1931. A plan to do just this was in full swing in February, 1946, under the direction of Colonel Crawford Sams, the able and brilliant chief of MacArthur's Public Health and Welfare Section. I personally will bestow an orchid on the reporter who cracks the story of why this program was stopped dead in its tracks—although I think any well informed person could venture a good guess.

HAROLD STRAUSS

New York, August 14

[*Mr. Strauss, chief editor of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., is a former member of the Civil Information and Education Section of SCAP.*—EDITORS THE NATION]

TVA: Points for Debate

Dear Sirs: Ernest Kirschten's interesting article, TVA—The First Fifteen Years, in your issue of June 12, leaves me with several questions about what the TVA has demonstrated concerning the relative costs of producing electric power under public and private auspices.

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In the passage quoted from Mr. Clapp, the following facts emerge: in fiscal 1947, the TVA earned 5½ per cent on the capital invested in its power system. To make this figure comparable to the net earnings of private power companies, there should first be subtracted an allowance for interest on the investment. Mr. Clapp suggests 2 per cent for this purpose. This leaves 3½ per cent. There should then be subtracted an allowance for corporate income tax. Mr. Clapp suggests 38 per cent on net income, after interest. This would reduce the 3½ per cent to about 2 per cent, representing a net return on power sales averaging 1.59 cents per kilowatt-hour, when figured on a basis comparable with the operations of private power companies. There are two questions I should now like to see answered:

(1) Granting that the federal government could have borrowed the $400,000,000 invested in the TVA power system at 2 per cent, could private enterprise have obtained this amount at so low a rate? What is the average interest now being paid by private power companies on their bonds? Would it not be nearer 4 per cent? If this were the case, the adjusted net yield would be less than 1 per cent.

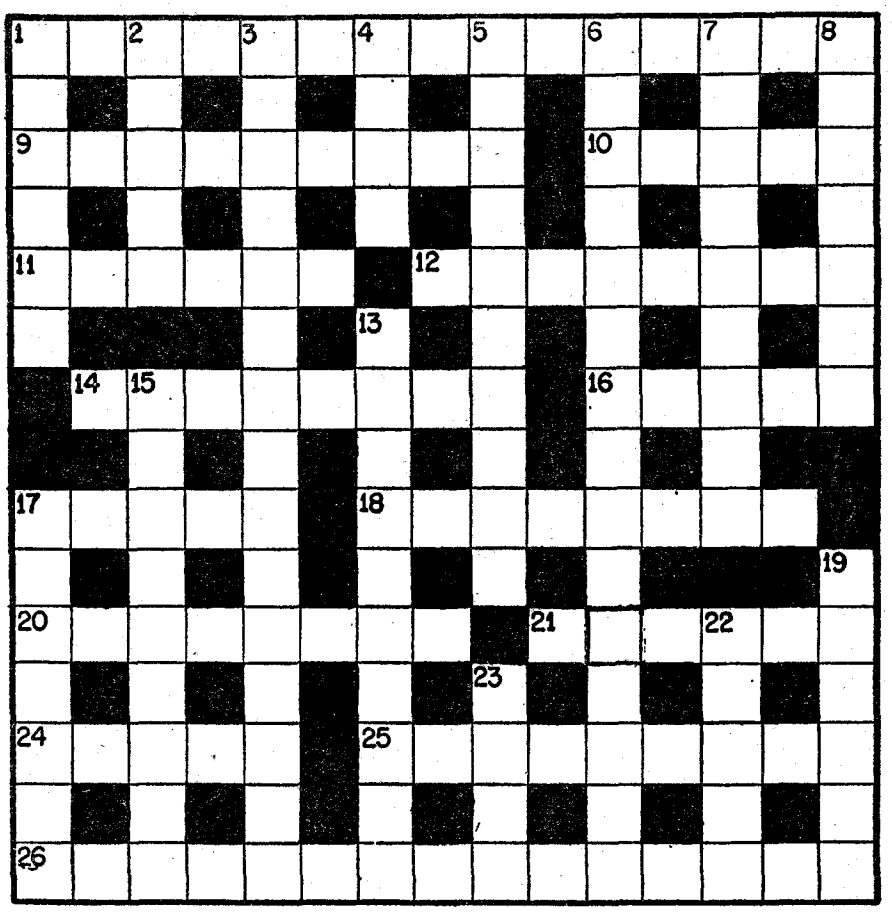
(2) Can 1 per cent, or even 2 per cent, be considered sufficient inducement for stockholders in private power companies? I do not ask this as a rhetorical question.

The point I am getting at is that the net yield of the TVA power operations, figured on either of the above bases, would seem to be too low to afford a true yardstick of the efficiency of privately operated power plants. Do we not really have to know how much above its average kilowatt-hour price (February, 1947) of 1.59 cents would TVA have had to sell its power to give a net rate of yield, after suitable deductions for interest and corporate income tax, equal to the average net return earned by private power companies in 1947 (whatever that may have been)? Or, if it is thought that the earnings of private power companies were excessively high, then let us substitute any rate of return that Mr. Kirschten thinks would represent a fair compensation for the risks assumed. It seems to me that only by drawing the comparison in such terms as these can the yardstick potentialities of the TVA be made to materialize.

I ask these questions not at all in criticism of the TVA, for which I have

Crossword Puzzle No. 275

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Automatic revolver? (8, 7)
9 Trivalent. (9)
10 Sing? Natch! (5)
11 The answer to many questions of chemistry. (6)
12 The mob he stirred up was a large one. (8)
14 Drinks for hemophiles? (8)
16 Find this a sort of opera. (5)
17 What one might do without a heavy tread. (5)
18 Which way did the Bishop go? In this direction. (8)
20 The fancy kind might have either two or four legs. (8)
21 One of the things we have been advised to keep out of the cold. (6)
24 Former predecessor of "lala"? (5)
25 Lowering, when not the range kind. (9)
26 Lincoln had the answer to it. (7, 8)

DOWN

1 The father of this is also a state. (6)
2 I do it, somewhat haphazardly. (5)
3 Could northwest be one? (8, 7)
4 The bard inquired as to its contents. (4)
5 Micawber? Such a character! (10)
6 Concerning such places as the Garden of Eden? (10, 5)
7 I begin to see how to get at a Roman, in a way. (9)
8 What a setter does to get the cash. (7)
13 Time for an excellent man-servant to make his appearance. (4, 6)
15 A sort of cart horse in the stalls. (9)
17 Almost all of 20 is right disturbed. (7)
19 Go in, as to port. (6)
22 An excuse for a libido, but there shouldn't be any to-do about it. (5)
23 The better half of Germany. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 274

ACROSS:—1 RICH MAN, POOR MAN, BEGGAR-MAN, THIEF, DOCTOR, LAWYER, MERCHANT, CHIEF; 9 PLIANCY; 10 TUMBREL; 12 FOURSOME; 14 ROULADE; 17 SABLE; 19 TRIUMPH; 25 PITFALL.

DOWN:—1 REPUBLICS; 2 CHIGGER; 3 MINIATURE; 4 NAYS; 5 ORTHOPEDIC; 6 RUMOR; 7 A PRIORI; 8 CLUE; 13 MARTINELLI; 15 COME AND GO; 16 FOOT RULER; 18 BOROTRA; 20 HAYFOOT; 21 MOPE; 22 and 26 across HEART AND SOUL; 24 HALF.

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only the highest regard, but simply from a desire to find out what the yardstick really shows. I hope Mr. Kirschten has the answers. D. L. HARLEY

Battle Creek, Mich., July 25

Footnotes and Rebuttal

Dear Sirs: While I suggested in my article that the TVA might well make an interest allowance for yardstick purposes, it seems to me that Mr. Harley is somewhat confused on this point. Also, he neglects to differentiate between wholesale and retail distribution of power, a factor which I would have stressed had space permitted. TVA is a wholesaler while most utilities sell their power at retail.

Certainly, TVA's 5½ per cent return in 1947 is comparable to the 5½ to 6 per cent return generally allowed to private firms by regulatory commissions. But they do not include interest in the base for such a return. If it were reckoned as a cost, the TVA management argues, it would put a double burden on the consumer: (1) the return on the investment, and (2) interest on the money with which the investment was made.

As for Mr. Harley's doubts about the 2 per cent figure used by Mr. Clapp in his discussion of hypothetical TVA interest payments, this seems to me reasonable enough. Even today, utilities are finding no great trouble in selling bonds at around 2½ per cent, and money certainly was cheaper during the years in which most of the TVA plants were built. True, older utility bonds have brought higher yields, but many of these have been refinanced at lower rates.

I quoted Mr. Clapp as saying that you might divide TVA's return of $21,800,000 "according to any theory you care to use," so let us try one which, I believe, approximates the capitalization of a privately owned utility. Let us assume that $200,000,000 of TVA's power investment is in the form of 2 per cent bonds, $100,000,000 in 4½ per cent preferred stock, and $100,000,000 by common stock.

Under this set-up, the bondholders would get $4,000,000. This would leave $17,800,000. Federal income taxes (24 per cent on preferred dividends and 38 per cent on the remaining net income) would take about $6,200,000. Preferred stockholders then would get $4,500,000. There would remain $7,100,000, or 7½ per cent, for the common stockholders. Surely, these yields

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would attract plenty of capital to a safe, sound, sure business.

As to the wholesale-retail point: The real TVA yardstick is not to be found so much in its wholesale rates as in the retail rates charged by the municipal and cooperative distributors of TVA power. The cost of generating power, under given conditions, is bound to be about the same under public or private auspices. The question is why power which costs only a few mills to produce and transmit costs several cents by the time the consumer turns on his lamp, his stove, his radio or his fan.

TVA's wholesale rate is not sharply lower than that of private utilities with modern equipment. But under the TVA contract, it is resold at rates among the very lowest in the United States. One important result is that consumers in the TVA area use more power—2,500 k.w.h. annually, or 60 per cent more than the national average. These increased sales bring in enough revenue to cover costs and to permit the low retail rates. In 1947, TVA area retailers averaged a return of 10 per cent above costs. After paying interest on their investment, they still had a surplus of about $10,000,000.

An example worth citing is that of the Franklin (Tenn.) Power & Light Co. This is a private company which has been buying its power from TVA and reselling it at the TVA basic rates since 1939. It is subject to the state utilities commission, and it must pay all the usual taxes. Yet recently it cut its rates below the TVA schedule and now sells electricity cheaper than any other private utility in the country. Incidentally, 31 other distributors in the area are charging less than TVA's basic rates.

All this shows, I believe, that TVA is soundly operated and that it is not giving anything away at the expense of the American taxpayer. Eventually, he will get back every dollar he put into TVA, not to mention a regular return to the Treasury thereafter. It seems to me, however, that even if the financial picture were less favorable, TVA still would have to be regarded as completely justified. In a relatively short time, it has transformed a backward section into a land of promise. It has set a brilliant example of resource development before the whole world. The American people never made a better investment.

ERNEST KIRSCHTEN

St. Louis, July 30

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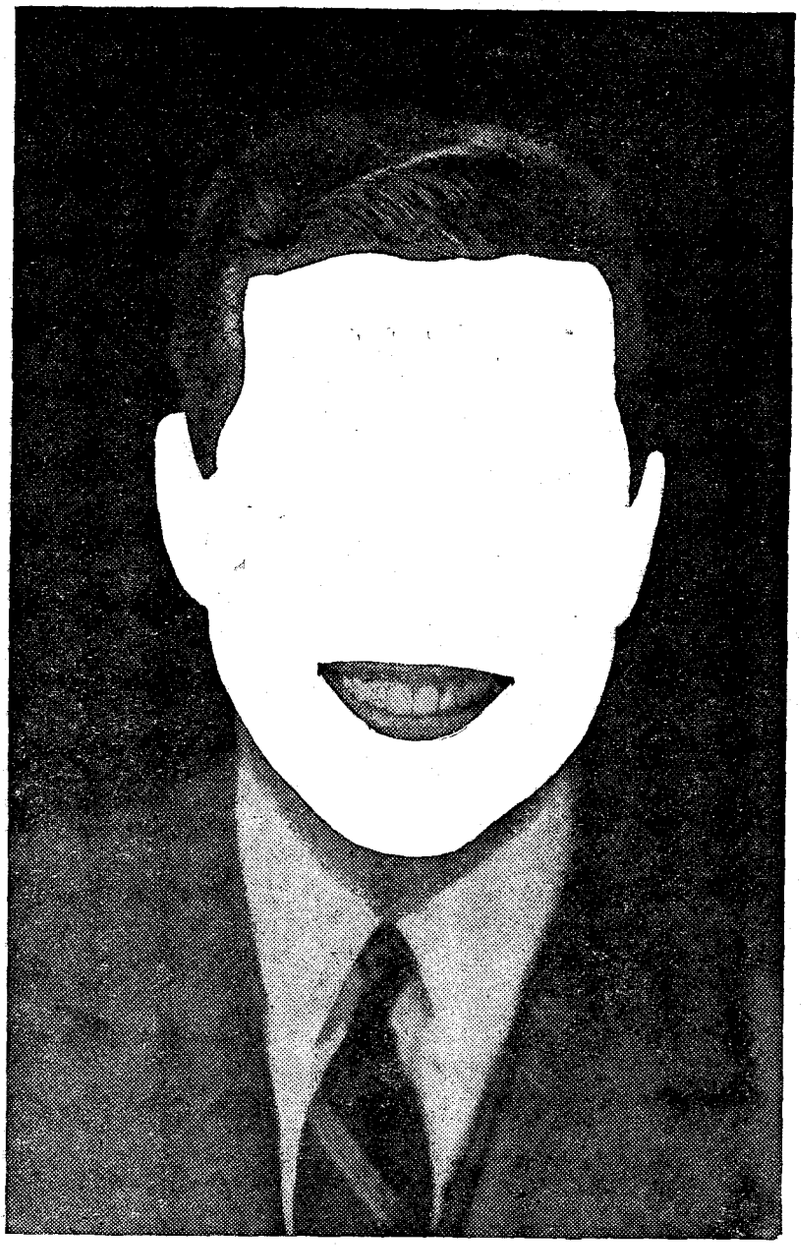

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